cutive Council would in no way affect the powers or prerogatives of the Ruler. It would only curtail the powers of the Dewan and the subordinate officers. As regards the necessity for such an institution, the persistent demand for it in successive sessions of the Assembly was ample proof. Such a body was particularly necessary when the head of the administration was a foreigner unacquainted with the needs or desires of the people.

The constitution and powers of the Legislative Council should also be reformed. The Dewan should cease to be the president of the Council. The Council should instead be allowed a non-official president.

The Press Regulation should be repealed.

The salaries of high officers should be reduced. Such a measure would go a long way to put down the communal feuds in the State, because high-paid posts often formed the central points in such feuds. There were at present eight officers, in addition to the Dewan, drawing salaries above Rs. 1,000. The State could not afford to pamper so many officers in that fashion. Nor was there any difficulty in getting competent men for lower salaries. If judges of the High Court could be got for no more than Rs. 900, there was no reason why the head of an executive department should not be available for less than Rs. 1,000.

In regard to the recruitment of officers, no person should be entertained in the service who was below 35 years of age. The fixing of the age in that manner would drive many to take up other pursuits.

The expenditure of the State could be considerably reduced by the amalgamation of many departments, such as Medical and Sanitary, P. W. D. and Railway, Agriculture and Industries, etc.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai, in regard to your remarks about an Executive Council, I have nothing to add to what I have said on the subject last year.

You want an immediate reduction in the pay of the higher officers. I shall consult them on the subject.

Then you want certain departments amalgamated, for instance, the Chief Engineer and the Railway Engineer; I do not know whether the Chief Engineer will be prepared to undertake railway work. I do not know if he is an expert in railway construction. All that I know is that the Chief Engineer is a Civil Engineer and that our Railway Engineer is a Railway Engineer. And I do not know by what form of transmutation, I should combine them, and produce an amalgam by which both could be administered by one officer. You want the Departments of Industries, Agriculture and Forests amalgamated and placed under one officer. I have yet to find an agricultural expert who is qualified as a sylviculturist. So the two are separate. You want the departments of Medicine and Sanitation amalgamated and placed under one person. Here too, I want you to consider the subject in the light of modern opinion and, that, sanitation is an entirely different thing from medical aid. I fear your many amalgamations are not feasible.

You want the system of toll gates to be changed because some buses on account of the particular line they run upon do not pay any toll at all while others pay tolls. I understand you suggest a compounding of the fees into an annual payment in lieu of this. I think there are already rules for compounding fees.

189. Reform of the representative institutions.

MR. K. PADMANABHAN (*Member, Karunagapalli taluk, Group II*) spoke on the necessity of reforming the constitution and powers of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and the Legislative Council. Under the existing law franchise for the Assembly was given (*a*) to all persons who paid an annual tax of not less than Rs. 50 and (*b*) to all graduates of not less than ten years' standing. Even at the time of the formation of the Assembly, the number of persons paying not less than Rs. 50 as tax was comparatively small. The number had become smaller and smaller after that. With the passing of the Nair and the Ezhava Regulations and the consequent partition of joint family properties, the number had become smaller still. The tendency was

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therefore for the Assembly to become a less and less representative body. Hence it was necessary that franchise for the Assembly should be given at least to all persons who paid a tax of not less than Rs. 10. Similarly, in the case of graduates, it was unnecessary to insist on a ten years' standing. All graduates, whatever their standing, should have the right to vote for the Assembly.

In the case of the Legislative Council also the franchise should be broadened still further. Universal suffrage was of course the perfect form of franchise. If that was not practicable in Travancore, all tax-payers should have the right to vote, irrespective of the amount of the tax they paid.

Another reform which was necessary was to create special electorates for the minority communities, both for the Legislative Council and the Assembly.

In regard to another matter, the constitution of the Legislative Council alone required a change. This was with regard to the President of the Council. Instead of the Dewan—President, the Council should have an elective President.

In conclusion, the member urged for the appointment of a committee to examine and revise the rules relating to the constitution and working both of the Council and of the Assembly.

190. Reform of the representative institutions in the State.

MR. P. JACOB KURIAN (*Member, Nominated*) said there were so many representative institutions in the State such as the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the Legislative Council, the Municipal Councils etc. Of these he wanted to speak first and foremost about the Assembly. It had its origin during the time of H. H. the late Maharaja. Since its inception twenty four years ago, no changes were made in its constitution or working. It was high time that it should be either mended or ended. The Assembly will be celebrating its Silver Jubilee next year. The present moment was therefore opportune for making some reforms. A committee should be appointed at once to examine the question. Another healthy reform that could be thought of in this connection was the adoption of measures for quickening the political consciousness of the people. Under present conditions no community could take anything but a jaundiced view of the other communities. This kind of jealousy and distrust should be uprooted.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 2 P. M. and met again at 3 P. M.

191. Reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

MR. T. K. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Member, Trivandrum taluk, Group I*) said that the past record of the Assembly bore eloquent testimony to the useful part played by it in the scheme of the administration. Any attempt to reform the Assembly was therefore well worth making. The member had the following suggestions to make in this matter :—

(1) Instead of representations which led to no debates, discussions should be allowed in the Assembly and votes should be taken. Coupled with this, heads of departments should be made members of the Assembly. They should form the official side of the Assembly.

(2) The duration of the Assembly should be extended to 3 years,

(3) The property qualification for the franchise should be reduced from Rs. 50 to Rs. 25.

(4) The Assembly should have the power of discussing the annual Budget before it was introduced into the Legislative Council. It was enough if the house had the right of expressing its opinion on the Budget, not of passing it.

(5) Important legislative measures might also be discussed in the Assembly.

These were only a few suggestions. The details of the reforms should be settled by a committee which should have in its composition members of the Assembly and the Legislative Council as well as other experienced public men.

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